

CROSS-POLLINATING BAPTISTS

September 21, 1997 (Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) -

The following is excerpted from the article "Mugwump Baptists," E. L. Bynum, Plains Baptist Challenger, July 1997 (P.O. Box 3100, Lubbock, TX 79452) --

Recently, a preacher friend sent me a copy of the Temple News, for May 1997. This is a publication of Temple Baptist Church, Odessa, Texas, pastored by Jerry Thorpe. He has long been a popular speaker in the Baptist Bible Fellowship, and has been featured many times as a speaker for various youth meetings. We would like to quote some lines from Pastor Jerry Thorpe's column. His words help us to understand what is going on in the religious world.

"Most of our staff feels the one big reason for our church's success is that we are attempting to understand, be responsive and relevant to our culture. And, this church is not a slave to tradition.

"One very noticeable aspect of Temple is that we are making a good impact upon both young and old, single and married, and appealing to both the committed Christian and the spiritual seeker. When you walk into the auditorium for worship and observe the large rear projection video screens and offering boxes, then hear a variety of praise and worship choruses, hymns, and dramas as well as a message that is relevant to people in our generation, please understand our purpose.

"If you are considering Temple for membership, this church might not be 'Your father's car' but we are building a model for the 21st century that God is blessing and we are awed, humbled and pleased by the process!"

The above reference to "the spiritual seeker," sounds very much like something that would be lifted out of Bill Hybels and his unscriptural ministry at Willow Creek Community Church, South Barrington, Illinois. A lot of religious garbage is coming out of this polluted fountain, and it is spreading itself in some strange places.

CROSS POLLINATION

Some plants of the same or a similar variety will pollinate each other from the blooms. We have heard it said that Baptists should practice some cross-pollination with other groups. They mean that we should get some ideas, practices, and doctrine from other groups. This will be deadly, as the following story will illustrate.

My father raised some of the juiciest and sweetest watermelons in our area of the country. He accomplished this by getting some good watermelon seeds in the first place. Then each time

when we would cut a watermelon, if it was extra sweet and juicy, he would save the seed for planting the next year. He was careful to plant our melons in the middle of our farm, far from the melon fields of less careful farmers. No wonder people wanted to buy our watermelons, because they were known to be sweet and juicy.

There was a melon that grew wild in our part of the country. The vine resembled a good watermelon vine in almost every respect. They were called piemelons, and they were not fit to eat. The rind was thick and almost unbreakable, and the flesh was unfit to eat. My dad cautioned us to watch out for the piemelon vines, and to cut them down before they bloomed. Why? This was because they would cross-pollinate with the good watermelons, and the watermelons were then unfit to eat. It was not that the piemelons were unfruitful. In fact they produced an abundance of attractive looking melons, and would grow in very difficult situations without care or cultivation.

PIEMELON BAPTISTS

We are seeing Baptists cross pollinating with other groups. They are picking up pollination from Bill Hybels, Robert Schuller, John McArthur, Chuck Swindoll, Southern Baptists, Interdenominationalists, new evangelicals, Billy Graham, and Jerry Falwell. It is producing an abundant harvest. The increase looks good, and Independent and/or Fundamental Baptists are swallowing it up. The trouble is, nobody seems to have noticed that it is producing piemelon Baptists. These Baptists no longer fit the pattern of our Baptist forefathers, and are a far cry from the Baptists of the New Testament.